

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 16744 01 OF 02 201318Z

44

ACTION EUR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8806

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 16744

LIMDIS

BERLIN ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, GE, WB

SUBJECT: BAHR REPORT ON NOVEMBER 8 MEETING WITH KOHL

REF: BONN 16345

1. SUMMARY: ON NOVEMBER 16 BAHR BRIEFED THE UK, US, AND FRENCH AMBASSADORS JOINTLY ON HIS NOVEMBER 8 MEETING WITH KOHL, THE 75TH AND LAST IN THE SERIES WHICH BEGAN THREE YEARS AGO. HE PAINTED A SOMBER PICTURE OF THE PRESENT STATE OF FRG-GDR RELATIONS. THE NOV 8 MEETING HAD NO POSITIVE RESULTS. THE TONE HAD BEEN AS COOL AS WHEN THE TALKS BEGAN. HE COULD NOT VENTURE A GUESS AS TO WHEN THE FRG-GDR EXCHANGE OF MISSIONS WOULD OCCUR, BUT IT NOW SEEMED A LONGER TERM MATTER THAN HE HAD PREVIOUSLY INDICATED. AT THE SAME
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PAGE 02 BONN 16744 01 OF 02 201318Z

TIME, BAHR TOLD THE AMBASSADORS THAT FRG-GDR TALKS

WERE GOING FORWARD OR WERE SCHEDULED ON A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES--BUT EXCLUDING CIVIL AIR MATTERS. END SUMMARY.

2. KOHL HAD FIRST PRODUCED AGREEMENT REQUEST FOR HIMSELF, ADDRESSED TO FRG FOREIGN MINISTRY. WHEN BAHR REFUSED TO ACCEPT THIS, KOHL IMMEDIATELY PRODUCED ANOTHER REQUEST, THIS TIME ADDRESSED TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. BAHR HAD COMMENTED THAT LATTER REQUEST WOULD ALSO CAUSE DIFFICULTIES SINCE IT REFERRED TO KOHL AS "MINISTER AND AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY", WHEREAS HE AND KOHL HAD PREVIOUSLY TALKED OF "MINISTER EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY" WITH PERSONAL TITLE OF AMBASSADOR. KOHL REPLIED HIS AUTHORITIES HAD STUDIED QUESTION AND CONCLUDED THERE WAS NO SUCH TITLE AS MINISTER EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY.

3. THERE HAD BEEN ALSO AN UNPLEASANT EXCHANGE ON THE RECENT GDR MEASURE RAISING THE COMPULSORY EXCHANGE REQUIREMENT FOR VISITORS TO THE GDR TO DM 20 PER DAY WHICH, BAHR HAD SAID, INSTEAD OF FACILITATING VISITS, MADE THEM MORE DIFFICULT AND WAS THUS CONTRARY TO THE VISITS AGREEMENT. KOHL HAD THEN REITERATED GDR DEMANDS THAT THE FRG STOP THE ILLEGAL TRADE IN GDR CURRENCY, AND SPECIFICALLY THAT THE WEST BERLIN EXCHANGE OFFICES BE CLOSED. BAHR REPLIED TO THIS BY SAYING THE FRG DID NOT PLAN TO CHANGE ITS DOMESTIC SYSTEM, INCLUDING NORMAL CURRENCY EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS. KOHL COUNTERED BY STRESSING THAT THE GDR DID NOT INTEND TO LET ITS ECONOMIC STABILITY BE PREJUDICED, AS IT HAD BEEN PRIOR TO THE BUILDING OF THE BERLIN WALL.

4. IN SHORT, BAHR TOLD THE AMBASSADORS THERE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A MARKED HARDENING AT THE MOMENT IN FRG-GDR RELATIONS. HE WAS UNABLE TO SAY WHEN THE TWO SIDES WOULD GET TO THE POINT OF EXCHANGING MISSIONS, BUT IT WAS CERTAINLY A LONGER-TERM PROPOSITION THAN HE HAD THOUGHT WHEN HE LAST DISCUSSED MATTER WITH AMBASSADORS.

5. BAHR SAID FONMIN SCHEEL HAD NOT DISCUSSED THE FRG-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 16744 01 OF 02 201318Z

GDR ESTABLISHMENT OF MISSIONS IN HIS RECENT TALKS IN MOSCOW. HE (BAHR) DOUBTED WHETHER THE RUSSIANS FULLY REALIZED THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE GDR ATTITUDE, OR HOW SERIOUSLY THE FRG TAKES THE PRESENT SITUATION. AS FOR THE GDR, IT COULD ALWAYS BE RELIED UPON TO MAKE TROUBLE WHEREVER IT COULD. WHEN THERE WERE TENSIONS IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS GENERALLY, AS WITH THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, THE EAST GERMANS MADE THE MOST OF IT IN THEIR

RELATIONS WITH THE FRG. THE RECENT CHANGES IN THE GDR LEADERSHIP ALSO PLAYED A ROLE. STOPH, WHO WAS NOW ON ICE, HAD BEEN A POSITIVE INFLUENCE. (BAHR SAID HE WAS NOT GUESSING ON THIS POINT. HE KNEW IT.) SINDERMANN WAS NOT INVOLVED IN FRG-GDR AFFAIRS, BUT CONCENTRATED ON THE ECONOMY. HONECKER WAS ADVISED ON FRG-GDR QUESTIONS BY PARTY PEOPLE AND, ON THE GOVERNMENT SIDE,

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PAGE 01 BONN 16744 02 OF 02 201322Z

44

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 16744

LIMDIS

BY FONMIN WINZER, A DOGMATIST AND "PRODUCT OF ULBRICHT".

6. BAHR SAID HE HAD INFORMED KOHL ON NOVEMBER 8 THAT HE WOULD NOT CONTINUE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT WOULD BE REPLACED BY GAUS, THE MAN INTENDED TO LEAD THE FRG MISSION IN EAST BERLIN. KOHL HAD REPLIED THAT HE WOULD ALSO BE LEAVING. GAUS' GDR PARTNER IN THE TALKS WOULD BE SEIDEL OF THE FONOFF. BAHR COMMENTED TO AMBASSADORS THAT SEIDEL WAS A DECENT INDIVIDUAL BUT WITHOUT ANY INFLUENCE, ESPECIALLY WITH KOHL'S DEPARTURE. SEIDEL

WAS A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF KOHL'S. BAHR THEN SAID THAT IN RESPONSE TO A RECENT FRG MESSAGE CONVEYING INTEREST IN CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS RE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MISSIONS, THE GDR HAD INDICATED THAT NIER WOULD BE AVAILABLE. NIER, BAHR SAID, WOULD REPLACE SCHOLZ AS DEPUTY FONMIN; THE LATTER WAS SLATED TO BE GDR AMBASSADOR IN PARIS. COMMENT: FROM BAHR'S REMARKS IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHAT THE NIER-SEIDEL ROLES WILL BE IN THE FRG-GDR TALKS, BUT IT COULD BE INFERRED THAT NIER IS INTENDED

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BONN 16744 02 OF 02 201322Z

TO HANDLE THE MORE IMPORTANT ISSUES AND SEIDEL RUN-OF-THE-MILL AFFAIRS. BAHR SAID THAT NIER WOULD BE IN CHARGE OF THE GDR DELEGATION IN THE CULTURAL TALKS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN NOVEMBER 27. END COMMENT.

7. BAHR SAID KOHL HAD AGAIN COMPLAINED THAT THE FRG WAS NOT DOING ANYTHING TO PREVENT MISUSE OF THE TRANSIT ROUTES TO BERLIN, AND STATED THAT THE FRG WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CONSEQUENCES. BAHR COMMENTED THAT HE TOOK KOHL'S WARNING SERIOUSLY. IT COULD NOT BE EXCLUDED THAT THE GDR WAS THINKING OF TAKING STEPS AFFECTING THE TRANSIT ROUTES.

8. BAHR SAID THE FRG DID NOT INTEND AT PRESENT TO REPLY TO THE GDR NOTE PROTESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRG ENVIRONMENT OFFICE IN WEST BERLIN, OR TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THE EAST GERMANS. IF AND WHEN THE THREE POWERS REPLIED TO THE SOVIETS, THE FRG COULD SAY SOMETHING PARALLEL TO THE GDR. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR REMARKED THAT THE GDR HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH INTERPRETING THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT, AND IT WOULD BE WELL FOR THE FRG TO AVOID GETTING INTO A DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT WITH THE GDR.

10. OTHER TOPICS DISCUSSED: (A) AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND GAVE A BRIEF RESUME OF PRESENT STATE OF US EXPLORATORY TALKS WITH THE GDR, NOTING GDR INABILITY SO FAR TO MEET OUR REQUIREMENTS ON OFFICE AND RESIDENCE ACCOMMODATIONS. (B) BAHR SAID KOHL WOULD BE IN BONN NOVEMBER 23 TO LOOK AT A POSSIBLE RESIDENCE FOR HIMSELF, CLOSE TO THE BUILDING WHICH THE GDR HAS ALREADY RENTED FOR MISSION PERSONNEL HOUSING. (C) BAHR SAID HE DID NOT KNOW EXACTLY WHEN BRANDT WOULD VISIT THE USSR PURSUANT TO BREZHNEV INVITATION EXTENDED WHEN LATTER VISITED BONN EARLIER THIS YEAR. HE REMARKED VISIT WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE IN NEXT 2-3 MONTHS, BUT IT WOULD BE MORE LIKELY IN FIRST THAN SECOND HALF OF 1974.

11. COMMENT: BAHR CLEARLY INTENDED TO GIVE A SOMBER

VIEW OF THE CURRENT STATE OF FRG-GDR RELATIONS. HE WAS
LESS THAN HIS USUAL BOUNCY SELF AND HE DID NOT PRODUCE
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PAGE 03 BONN 16744 02 OF 02 201322Z

ANY IDEAS AS TO HOW PRESENT DIFFICULTIES MIGHT BE OVER-
COME AND PROGRESS CHARTED. YET, FROM HIS OWN ACCOUNT,
FRG-GDR EXCHANGES ARE GOING FORWARD ON A WIDE RANGE OF
SUBJECTS. THIS FACT DOES NOT IN ITSELF MEAN THAT
PROBLEMS WILL BE RESOLVED, BUT IT DOES SUGGEST SOME.
MOVEMENT. HIS
REMARK THAT THE RUSSIANS PROBABLY DO NOT FULLY REALIZE
THE CONSEQUENCES OF CURRENT GDR MOVES CARRIED THE
IMPLICATION THAT IF THEY DID, THEY WOULD TAKE CORRECTIVE
ACTION. BAHR DID NOT COMMENT ON HIS OWN FUTURE PLANS
AND RESPONSIBILITIES, NOW THAT THE BAHR-KOHL TALKS HAVE
ENDED. THE OMISSION MAY BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO FACTORS
AND UNCERTAINTIES WHICH WE HAVE REPORTED ELSEWHERE
(SEE REFTEL).
HILLENBRAND

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